

The invention in which an exclusive right is claimed is defined by the following:

1. A method for enabling media clips having a common desired characteristic quality to be identified from among a plurality of different media clips, each of the plurality of different media clips having been previously associated with a style identifier that is indicative of and corresponds to a characteristic quality of the media clip, said method comprising the steps of:

- (a) enabling a desired style identifier to be provided as a search criterion;
- (b) initiating an automated search of the plurality of different media clips, based upon the search criterion; and
- (c) as a result of the automated search of the plurality of different media clips, identifying media clips that have been associated with the desired style identifier and thus have a common desired characteristic quality.

2. The method of Claim 1, wherein each media clip in the plurality of different media clips has previously been associated with an absolute ranking value for each of a plurality of different attributes, further comprising the steps of:

- (a) enabling a desired attribute to be provided to sort the plurality of different media clips based upon the absolute ranking value of the desired attribute that was associated with each of the plurality of different media clips; and
- (b) automatically sorting the plurality of different media clips as a function of the absolute ranking value associated with each media clip for the desired attribute.

3. The method of Claim 1, wherein each of the plurality of different media clips has previously been associated with an absolute ranking value for each of a plurality of different attributes, further comprising the steps of:

- (a) enabling a desired attribute to be provided to sort the media clips identified by the automated search; and
- (b) automatically sorting the media clips that were identified by the automated search, as a function of the absolute ranking value associated with each media clip for the desired attribute.

4. The method of Claim 1, wherein the plurality of different media clips are stored in a database that is accessible over a network.

5. A method for enabling a user to carry out an automated search of a plurality of different media clips to identify any media clip included therein that has a characteristic quality desired by the user, comprising the steps of:

(a) associating one of a plurality of different style identifiers with each of the plurality of different media clips, each different style identifier corresponding to a different characteristic quality, selection of a style identifier associated with each media clip being based upon a subjective evaluation of the characteristic quality of the media clip, an identical style identifier being associated with different media clips that subjectively have been determined to have the same characteristic quality, but which do not necessarily relate to a common subject;

(b) enabling a user to indicate a specific style identifier upon which to search the plurality of different media clips; and

(c) searching the plurality of different media clips in an automated manner, to identify media clips included therein that have been associated with the specific style identifier indicated by the user.

6. The method of Claim 5, further comprising the step of associating absolute ranking values for each of a plurality of different attributes with each of the plurality of different media clips, a ranking value for each different attribute associated with each media clip being based upon a subjective evaluation of the media clip in regard to the attribute.

7. The method of Claim 6, further comprising the steps of:

(a) enabling a user to indicate a desired attribute upon which to sort media clips in an automated manner;

(b) sorting the media clips in the automated manner based upon the absolute ranking value associated with each media clip for the desired attribute; and

(c) enabling the user to access media clips, as thus sorted.

8. The method of Claim 7, wherein the media clips that are sorted are the plurality of different media clips.

9. The method of Claim 7, wherein the media clips that are sorted are the media clips identified by the automated search as being associated with the specific style identifier indicated by the user.

10. The method of Claim 5, wherein the plurality of different media clips are stored as digital data in an electronically accessible memory.

11. The method of Claim 5, wherein the plurality of different media clips are accessible by a user over a network.

12. The method of Claim 5, further comprising the step of associating a keyword with each media clip included in the plurality of different media clips, for use in searching the media clips based upon a keyword.

13. The method of Claim 12, further comprising the steps of:

- (a) enabling a user to indicate a desired keyword upon which to search the plurality of different media clips;
- (b) searching the plurality of different media clips as a function of the desired keyword, in an automated manner; and
- (c) identifying any media clip with which the desired keyword has been associated, as a result of searching in the automated manner.

14. The method of Claim 12, wherein the step of enabling a user to indicate the desired style identifier comprises the steps of:

- (a) enabling the user to select a media clip from among any media clips that were identified as being associated with the desired keyword; and
- (b) employing the style identifier associated with the media clip selected by the user for use in searching the plurality of different media clips to identify other media clips associated with a style identifier that is identical to that of the media clip selected by the user.

15. The method of Claim 14, further comprising the step of indicating any other media clips associated with the style identifier that is identical to that of the media clip selected by the user.

16. The method of Claim 5, further comprising the step of associating a type identifier with each of the plurality of different media clips.

17. The method of Claim 16, further comprising the steps of:

(a) enabling a user to indicate a desired type identifier for use in searching the plurality of different media clips, in an automated manner; and

(b) indicating any media clips found by searching that are associated with both the desired type identifier and with the desired style identifier, from among the plurality of different media clips.

18. The method of Claim 5, further comprising the step of associating a category with each media clip included in the plurality of different media clips, for use in searching the media clips based upon a category.

19. The method of Claim 18, further comprising the steps of:

(a) enabling a user to indicate a desired category upon which to search the plurality of different media clips;

(b) searching the plurality of different media clips as a function of the desired category, in an automated manner; and

(c) identifying any media clip with which the desired category has been associated, as a result of searching in the automated manner.

20. The method of Claim 19, wherein the step of enabling a user to indicate the desired style identifier comprises the steps of:

(a) enabling the user to select a media clip from among any media clips that were identified as being associated with the desired category; and

(b) employing the style identifier associated with the media clip selected by the user for use in searching the plurality of different media clips to identify other media clips associated with a style identifier that is identical to that of the media clip selected by the user.

21. The method of Claim 20, further comprising the step of indicating any other media clips associated with the style identifier that is identical to that of the media clip selected by the user.

22. The method of Claim 5, wherein the media clips identified by the search are each represented with an icon.

23. The method of Claim 22, wherein the media clips comprise a graphic image, said icon comprising a thumbnail representation of the graphic image.

24. The method of Claim 5, further comprising the step of enabling the user to select any of the media files identified by the search for transfer from a remote storage to a local storage, by activating a graphic control.

25. A memory medium having processor executable instructions for performing steps (b) and (c) of Claim 5.

26. A memory medium having processor executable instructions for performing the steps of Claim 7.

27. A method for sorting a plurality of different media clips, each of the plurality of different media clips having been previously associated with an absolute ranking value for each of a plurality of different attributes, said method comprising the steps of:

(a) enabling a desired attribute to be input, to sort the plurality of different media clips based upon the absolute ranking value of the desired attribute that was associated with each of the plurality of different media clips; and

(b) automatically sorting the plurality of different media clips as a function of the absolute ranking value associated with each media clip for the desired attribute.

28. A system that enables a user to carry out an automated search of a plurality of different media clips to identify any media clip included therein that has a characteristic quality desired by the user, each of the plurality of different media clips being associated with one of a plurality of different style identifiers, each different style identifier corresponding to a different characteristic quality, comprising:

(a) a processor;

(b) a display coupled in communication with the processor;

(c) a user input device that connected in communication with the processor and which enables a user to provide input data to the processor; and

(d) a memory coupled to the processor, said memory storing a plurality of machine instructions that are executed by the processor, causing the processor to carry out a plurality of functions, including:

(i) enabling the user to employ the user input device to select a specific style identifier upon which to search the plurality of different media clips; and

(ii) searching the plurality of different media clips, to identify media clips included therein that have been associated with the specific style identifier indicated by the user.

29. The system of Claim 28, wherein the plurality of different media clips are stored in a non-volatile medium that is coupled in communication with the processor.

30. The system of Claim 28, further comprising a local processor and a local memory in which machine instructions are stored that are executed by the local processor, said local processor being coupled to the display and the user input device, wherein the non-volatile medium and the processor are disposed at a location that is geographically remote from the user, the local processor, the local memory, the display, and the user input device, and wherein the processor is coupled in communication with the local processor over a data network.

31. The system of Claim 30, wherein the machine instructions executed by the local processor cause the local processor to provide an identification on the display, of the media clips that have been associated with the specific style identifier indicated by the user.

32. The system of Claim 28, wherein absolute ranking values for each of a plurality of different attributes are associated with each of the plurality of different media clips, a ranking value for each different attribute being associated with each media clip based upon a subjective evaluation of the media clip in regard to the attribute, and wherein the machine instructions further cause the processor to:

(a) enable the user to employ the user input device to indicate a desired attribute upon which to sort media clips; and

(b) sort the media clips based upon the absolute ranking value associated with each media clip for the desired attribute.

33. The system of Claim 28, wherein a keyword is associated with each media clip included in the plurality of different media clips, and wherein the machine instructions executed by the processor further cause the processor to:

(a) enable the user to employ the user input device to indicate a desired keyword upon which to search the plurality of different media clips; and

(b) search the plurality of different media clips as a function of the desired keyword so as to identify any media clip with which the desired keyword has been associated.

34. The system of Claim 28, wherein the machine instructions executed by the processor further cause the processor to:

(a) enable the user to employ the user input device to select a media clip from among any media clips that were identified as being associated with the desired keyword; and

(b) employ the style identifier associated with the media clip selected by the user for use in searching the plurality of different media clips to identify other media clips associated with a style identifier that is identical to that of the media clip selected by the user.

35. The system of Claim 28, wherein a type identifier is associated with each of the plurality of different media clips, and wherein the machine instructions executed by the processor further cause the processor to:

(a) enable a user to employ the user input device to indicate a desired type identifier for use in searching the plurality of different media clips; and

(b) search the plurality of different media clips to identify any media clips that are associated with both the desired type identifier and with the desired style identifier.

36. A system that enables a user to carry out an automated sort of a plurality of different media clips, each of the plurality of different media clips being associated with an absolute ranking value for each of a plurality of different predefined attributes, comprising:

(a) a processor;

(b) a display coupled in communication with the processor;

(ii) sorting the plurality of different media clips, based upon the absolute ranking values of each of the plurality of different media clips for the desired attribute indicated by the user.